



A Thirst / 1980

S. LaRue – 1/2016

My mascara was running, clothing soaked with perspiration, which I'm guessing is common when you engage in gymnastics for over an hour in a tuxedo jacket, leather pants and women's-knee-high-leather-spike-heeled-boots, under about a million watts of multicolored lighting. Modern-day white-boy problems can be so insidious.

I didn't know her name, doubt she knew mine. She'd been at the head of the throbbing spectator's mob, calculating, watching me, like a caged specimen from the wilds of Borneo shoved into the light for closer examination. Perhaps she was an anthropology student, maybe doing some research for an animal husbandry report – coulda just been curious – could have been an ardent carnivore trying to scare up dinner.

I'd given up trying to define these people years before. They had a *jones for spectacle* – just so happens, I'd ended up *as a spectacle*. My jones, often referred to as 'Mister' due to his marionette wrangling skills, trotted me into the arena as often as he could swing it. I'd been singled out, given the honor or providing distraction.

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She'd appeared in the breezeway between the stage and dressing rooms, pulled me into the backstage ladies room, shoved me into a corner, threatened me with her expression until I gave an imperceptible signal accepting status as captive. She turned, shoved her head into the sink.

A Savannah resident of the African plains, animal, it was her turn at the watering hole, one hand on the valve, one on the outer edge of the sink, bent at the waist, knees, ankles – presenting – noisily pulling moisture into her parched being. Lascivious, unaware....

I cupped my hands in the sink making it easier for her to lap the tepid fluid. Her rhythm took little notice.